डा० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय : गवर्निंग बॉडी का कार्यकाल न बढ़ाया जाए, इसके बारे में क्या कर रहे हैं?

श्री सभापति : उसको वह देख लेंगे।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, the Visva Bharati University was set up not as a memorial to Tagore, but it was set up as a model university in the country. I am sorry to say that it is losing its all-India character because there are certain serious irregularities in the University. One of them is lack of hostel accommodation. Since there is lack of hostel accommodation, students from different States are not able to continue their studies. And the lack of accommodation arises because the Visva Bharati University is not being given proper funds to set up new hostels and to create proper opportunities for the students coming from different States. Will the Minister assure that proper funds will be made available over and above the normal grant to ensure that this University has enough hostels?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, it is a well-known fact that the funds available for distribution to Universities, which also include Central Universities, do fall short of what the requirement is. So far as the Visva Bharati University is concerned, it is natural that all of us except that basic amenities have to be provided for the students, especially for the students coming from outside. (*Interruption*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Residential accommodation. That is what he means.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: We will try to accommodate this in the next Plan.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, it is very heartening to learn from the Minister that the Government does not want to unduly tinker with the institutions and erode the norms which sanctify the institutions. The autonomy of universities is sacrosanct. But I would like to know from the Minister this. We have been reading about grave irregularities in the functioning of the universities. What are the norms, what, according to the laws, statutes that govern, is the procedure which will ensure that people do not get away with wrong doings?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: The Acts themselves have sufficient provisions by which action can be taken. If there is anything wanting in any case, there, the Government will have to step in and as I have assured the hon. Member before him, in case any such things happen, the Government will discharge its responsibilities.

*112. [*The questioner (Chowdhry Hari Singh) was absent. For answer,* vide *cols* 43-44 infra].

FICCI demand for making Indian rupee Fully Convertible

*113. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:†
SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has demanded that the Indian rupee be made fully convertible;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what are the precise implications of this demand on the Indian economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has suggested that the process of liberalisation initiated through the recent trade policy reforms would eventually lead to a convertible rupee. The medium term objective of the Government is to progressively eliminate licensing and quantitative restrictitons on capital goods, raw materials and components. This shift is proposed to be achieved over a three to five years period which would make rupee convertible for a substantial part of trade transactions.

(c) Trade account convertibility of the rupee can provide individuals/firms a much wider opportunity to buy goods from abroad provided no quantitative restrictions on imports are maintained. Trade convertibility would create a competitive environment and promote domestic production by easing access to capital goods, raw materials and intermediates from abroad. In the medium term, it will facilitate efficient allocation of resources and expose the economy to international competition enabling Indian industry to become internationally competitive.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Sir, the question reflects the very optimistic mood of the Government which I do not share. (*Interruptions*).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: The answer reflects, not the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly put your question.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: The answer reuects the...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

India's position on intellectual property rights

*101. KUMARI ALIA:

SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reported Statement of Dr. Abid Hussain, Indian Ambassador to U.S., that India will have to redefine its position on Intellectual Property Rights to ensure free flow of technology into the country, particularly in view of the fact that other developing countries like China and Brazil have already begun bilateral negotiations with developed countries on various aspects of economic policy; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. In the course of an address covering many aspects of Indo-US economic and political relations, delivered on 19 August, 1991, to the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, the Ambassador of India to the United States of America made *inter-alia*, the points that (i) a time had come when even the sensitive issues of intellectual property rights required to be addressed in the context of changes which were taking place in the structure of our economy and (ii) that India and US must appreciate each others' sensitivities in the matter and evolve a position of mutual advantage without over looking the value of intellectual property as a source of technological progress.

(b) The issue of Intellectual Property Rights is being negotiated in the Uruguay Round. Government will keep under review the progress of these negotiations to strive for the most advantageous outcome for India.